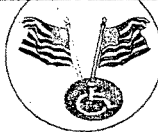


The Freedom Center



THE FREEDOM CENTER, INC

January 10, 2003

Dear Senator Leahy and Senator Hatch:

Rose Hill Plaza, Unit A-20
1560 Opossumtown Pike
Frederick, MD 21702

301-846-7811
301-846-9070 (fax)
TTY: 711

"Empowering people
with disabilities to
lead self-directed,
independent, and pro-
ductive lives in a bar-
rier-free community"

Jamey E. George,
Executive Director

Board of Directors:

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I am an Executive Director for The Freedom Center, a Center for Independent Living in Frederick, MD. We serve people with disabilities of all ages and disabilities in the Frederick and Carroll County region. Our mission is to empower people with disabilities to lead self-directed, independent, and productive lives in a barrier-free community. Our services and supports include systems and individual advocacy, information and referral, peer counseling, and independent living skills training. We promote the removal of physical and attitudinal barriers to enhance the quality of life for individuals with disabilities and to ensure fully integrated communities in which people with disabilities are able to have the same opportunities to live the American Dream in their own homes just like everyone else.

I find it disappointing to hear of President Bush's decision to nominate Jeffrey Sutton to the Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit Court. If he is confirmed, he will become a Federal Judge with a lifetime appointment with one step away from being appointed to the Supreme Court Justice. It is so wrong to appoint an individual who is biased against civil rights. He has in many occasions demonstrated his lack of understanding and care for individuals with disabilities. To name a couple, he has stated that the Americans with Disabilities Act is unconstitutional. He testified in opposition to Patricia Garrett's right to work without being discriminated against. He testified in opposition to L.C. and E.W. in the Olmstead case. He basically testified against their right to live in the most integrated setting of their choosing as it states in the ADA. Mr. Sutton is known for purposely looking for ADA cases so he can testify against it. He has struck against Medicaid, IDEA, Section 504, etc. People with Disabilities are people, too, and have the right to be treated as human beings. It is their right to be included in the mainstream of the American Society. It is my opinion, and I represent many who feel the same, that it is morally wrong to appoint Jeffrey Sutton to the status of Federal Judge when he harbors many biases against people with disabilities. It is my opinion that he will never be capable of making a judicial decision that serves Justice for All. Our constitution was written to give us freedom and with him as a Judge, all freedoms will be lost. We oppose the nomination of Jeffrey Sutton. It is our hope that President Bush will rescind his nomination. If it is not rescinded, it is my hope that people with disabilities are not stripped of their civil rights with the confirmation of Jeffrey Sutton's nomination. Thank you for your time and consideration in this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Jamey George
Jamey George
Executive Director